GOD's CALL

TO

Unconverted Sinners, to turn to the LORD.

Painly ſhewing every poor Sinner the Miſerableneſs of his own Eſtate, and how great an Enemy to himſelf tho' the Lord be daily calling to him, *To turn and live*, and profeſſeth, *He delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner*; yet for all this will ye go on and die.

Alſo, The happy Condition of the People of GOD, in that they have ſuch a Father, that had rather ſee their Converſion than Condemnation.

And laſtly, To the Terror of the wicked and ungodly Men, is ſet forth, That if they will not pray to God, that they may live with him in Heaven, they ſhall die and be tormented with the Devil and his Angels in Hell Fire.

The ſeventy ſecond Edition. By R. BAXTER.

Math. xviii. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

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GOD's Call to unconverted Sinners, &c.

Ezekiel. xxxiii. 11. *Say unto them, As I live ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the Death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his Way and live: Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil Way; for why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?*

THAT Great GOD that made the Heaven and the Earth, and all living Creatures therein, and hath redeemed you by his Son Chriſt Jeſus; ye that were loſt and undone Sinners, to you he hath ſent his Goſpel or glad tidings of Peace, and to you hath he given this privilege, *That as many as believe in him ſhall have eternal Life*; as many as turn to him ſhall live, and thoſe that turn not ſhall die, This is the unchangeable will and Law of God, that wicked Men muſt turn or die; for ſee the words of Chriſt, *Matth.* xviii. 3. *Verily I ſay unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And *Heb:* xii. 14. *Without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord.* And in *Pſal.* xi. 5. *The Lord loveth the Righteous, but the wicked his Soul hateth,* So that it is brought to this, that wicked Men muſt turn or die.

1. From which Words you muſt obſerve, *Firſt,* the Pity and Love to loſt and undone Souls, that he condeſcends to Reaſon the Caſe with them thus, *Why will ye die?* that the Almighty and powerful

powerful God ſhould ſtoop to poor ſinful Duſt and Aſhes, herein is this great and wonderful Love ſhown, that he delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he would turn and Live. God would not have them go in the Way that leads to Hell, calls them daily by the Mouth of his Prophets *to turn and live*, and tells them, *There is no peace to the wicked.* Iſa. xlviii.22. and lvii, 21. God tells them, *The love of the World is enmity with God and if any Man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.* Yet for all this, worldly they are, and worldly will be. If the way to Hell be thro' the world, then to Hell they will go.

Oh! that Men would ſee the Folly of their own ways, and turn to the Lord, then ſhould they ſee goodneſs and beauty that is in the ways of God, and the great torments and anguiſh that follows the love of this wicked World. Oh! that wicked Men would thus converſe with their own Souls. Is it ſo, that I muſt either turn or die, be converted or condemned? It is time then for me to look about me, how have I fooliſhly ventured the loſs of my precious Soul then; Oh! God forbid that I ſhould neglect this any longer; muſt I turn or die? Oh! happy Day. O! what a happy hour is this, that is left me to repent in. Now will I ſet on a Reſolution to get Aſſurance of my Salvation; before I give any ſleep to my Eyes, or ſlumber to mine eye lids, by the Grace of God, I will reſolve preſently to return and ſo forſake my former courſes, and give up my ſelf wholly to the guidance of God: Shall the Lord be thus compaſſionate to my poor Soul, as to delight in my Salvation, and ſhall I poor miſerable wretch, delight in my own Damnation? Shall God

y unto me turn: And ſhall I not reſolve to
rn?

1. Conſider, *Firſt*, That it is the inviolable and
nchangeable law of God, *That wicked men muſt
urn or die.* Rom.viii. 8. Now if any Man be in the
he Fleſh, he cannot pleaſe God, *Pſal.* xi. 5. *The
Lord loveth the Righteous, but his Soul hateth
he wicked.* Pſal. ix. 17. *The wicked ſhall be turn-
d into hell, and all the Nations that forget God.*

The texts are plain enough to the View of every
oor Soul: If thou art one that believeſt, here's en-
ugh to ſatisfy thee, *That the wicked and ungodly
Men muſt either turn or die, be converted or con-
demned.* If you ſee not, is it becauſe you are wilfu-
y Blind. To what purpoſe doth God ſend his Meſ-
engers towards you? If you will not believe God
by the mouth of his Prophets, who doth intreat you
to be reconciled, yet you lend the deaf ear to them;
yea let me tell you, if you will not hear the voice
of God here, pronouncing the Sentence of Salvation
to you, yet you ſhall hear his Voice pronouncing
the Sentence of Condemnation againſt you here-
after.

I beſeech you therefore as you love your Souls,
not to quarrel with God and his Word, but ſtoop to
it, are you yet unconverted? know ere long you
muſt be converted or condemned: I beſeech you
therefore neglect not your own happineſs any longer
leaſt you be guilty of your own blood. Read *Ezek.*
xxxiii. 8. and you ſhall ſee how the Caſe ſtands:
*When I ſay to the wicked, O wicked Man, thou
ſhalt ſurely die If thou doeſt not ſpeak to warn
the wicked man of his ways, the wicked man ſhall
die in his iniquity, but his Blood will I require
at thy hands.* You ſee there, that the Miniſters of
the

the Gospel must Preach, and you must hear; and let me tell you, it is more easie to hear of Hell than to feel it; and yet tho' you think it an unwelcome Doctrine, that the Ministers of the Gospel should gall your tender Ears with Truth, that seems so harsh and grivous; yet it is the Duty of every faithful Minister of Christ, to deal truly and faithfully with Souls; for ye shall in no ways escape, unless ye strive to enter in at the strait Gate which leadeth unto Life: For Salvation and Condemnation will very suddenly bring all things to an End, and when it is too late, we shall hear some crying out, *What have I done? what simple courses have I taken? Upon what low account have I ventured the eternal welfare of my poor Soul? I would I had considered this but a little before, but alas now I am hurried into everlasting destruction. Consider this all you that forget God*, that your Day of pleasure will laste but a little while, your laughing will be turned into mourning, your joy into anguish, your small and short pleasure here will be turned into eternal Pains and torments hereafter.

2. Consider this all ye wicked and ungodly sinners, that if you will unfeignedly turn to God, it is his promise that you shall live and not die. The Lord professeth, *That he hath no delight in the Death of a Sinner, but would rather that he would turn and live.* God hath not shut up the door of mercy against you, but you shut it against yourselves; mercy stays for you, patience stays for you. Oh! how happy would you be, if you would but turn to him? and if you turn not, here is a Messenger of wrath and death, to pronounce against you. There is a wrath you are already under, and a death you are born under; and it is you yourselves. There

is alſo another death, that is a remeedleſs death, and a much greater torment than the firſt death, and this death falls upon all thoſe that are unconverted; God firſt offered you Mercy, if you will turn, and to thoſe that will not turn, he ſends his Meſſenger, that thou muſt expect nothing but Condemnation: If you will come at the call of Chriſt, you ſhall be converted: If you will become new creatures, God hath not a word of damning wrath, or death to ſpeak to you; but on the contrary, Life, Joy and Peace, Heaven and happineſs; the oldeſt ſinner, the worſt ſinner of you all, if he will but turn, he ſhall have Mercy and Salvation, Oh! then, if you love your Souls, turn, build on Chriſt the Rock, a new Foundation, learn to mortify the Fleſh, and live after the Spirit.

If you will but turn and come into a way of Mercy, the Lord will be ready to entertain you. If you truſt in God for Salvation, he is engaged by his promiſe to ſave you.

The Lord will be a Father to none but his Children, he will ſave none but theſe that forſake the World, the Fleſh and the Devil; that come into his Family, to be Members of his Son, and have Communion with his Saints. But if they come not to Chriſt, and are condemned, 'tis long of themſelves, for God's doors are open, and he is ſtill ready to receive you, if you turn to him with all your Hearts, for his promiſes are *Yea* and *Amen*, and he will not fail in the leaſt, in what he hath ſaid, *If ye Repent, ye ſhall be ſaved.* And if he hath ſaid. *They that repent ſhall not be damned*, his Words ſhall be fulfilled, for God is Truth, and in him is no lie.

3 Con-

3. Consider this, that God taketh delight in Mens Salvation, but not in their Damnation; he had rather that they would turn and live, than go on in Sin and die. Conversion of Sinners is the delight of his Soul; yet that Justice might be executed and fully vindicated, God is resolved if you will not be converted, you shall be condemned; yet God is so far your Friend, and against your Condemnation, as he beseecheth you to be reconciled, and warns you of the great Danger you are in, and sets before you Life and Death, and desires you to accept of his Mercies, and not to damn your own Soul. But if this will not do, then he is resolved upon your condemnation, and commands his Prophets to say to you these Words, *O wicked Man thou shalt surely die.* It is in vain, for it can never be, while you remain in this unconverted, dark and dead Condition, for in this State you are his Enemies by Nature; yet for all this, the Lord taketh pleasure in the Conversion of his Enemies; for if God had rather you be damned than saved; he would not so much entreat you by his daily kindnesses, by giving you the means of this Life, to lead you to Repentance, he would not set so many examples before your Eys; no nor wait on you so patiently as he doth from Day to Day, from Year to Year; these be not the signs of one that taketh pleasure in your Death.

If it had been his delight to have seen you go to Hell, how easily could he have done it long ago? How easily before this Time could he have snatched thee away in thy Sins with a curse or an Oath, or a lie in thy Mouth, in thy Pride, in thy drunkenes, in thy deriding the ways of God? How easily could he have stopped thy Breath, or tamed thee with

with his plagues, and made the ſober in another World? How eaſy a Matter is it for God to rule the Tongue of the profaneſt railer? The Hands of the moſt malicious perſecutor? God can make them know that they are but worms: If God ſhould but frown upon a ſinner, how ſoon ſhould he drop into the Grave.

If God ſhould give Commiſſion unto Angels to go and deſtroy ten Thouſand Sinners, it would quickly be done: How eaſily can God ſnatch away Sinners in a Moment, and ſet them before his dreadful Majeſty, where they ſhall ſee ten Thouſand glorious Angels waiting at his Throne? And now thou art at the Bar, pleading thy Cauſe, ſhould they ask thee theſe Words, *What haſt thou now to ſay againſt thy Creator, his truth, his ſervants or his Ways?* Now plead thy Cauſe, What can'ſt thou ſay in excuſe of thy Sins? Now give account to thy Maker of thy Life, of thy Time, and all the Mercies thou haſt had. Oh how would thy ſtubborn Soul have melted thy proud looks, have beaten down thy ſtout and proud Words, turned thee into ſpeechleſs ſilence? A Word of his Mouth would take thee off this preſent Life; if he would ſay unto thee live no longer, or live in Hell, thou couldeſt not diſobey. What canſt thou ſay? Doth the Lord take pleaſure in thy Death? Surely he doth not; if he did, he would not, he could not have ſweated the drops of Blood for us, had he taken pleaſure in our Death; he would not have been ſo long faſting, praying all Night, neither would he have ſuffered his bitter and curſed Death upon the Croſs, pouring out his Soul a Sacrifice for our Sins, if he had delighted in our Death. If you had heard Chriſt but be-

bemoaning the State of Diſobedient and Impenitent People, in *Matth.* Chap. xxiii. 37. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how oft would I have gathered thee, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens, and ye would not*; if you had heard Chriſt on the Croſs praying for his Perſecutors, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*; would you thought he had delighted in the Death of the wicked; If you will not believe this, you have the Word and the Oath of the Lord for it, and dare you queſtion the Word of God, and the Oath of God? For God has ſworn that his Pleaſures is not in their Death, but in their Life, *Heb.* ix. 15, to 18.

Be intreated therefore, O unconverted Sinner, that heareth theſe Words, to ponder a little with thy ſelf, who is it that taketh pleaſure in thy Damnation. Certainly it is not God; he hath ſworn he takes no Pleaſure in it. You dare not ſay, you ſwear, you curſe and lie, and blaſpheme, and drink, and do all this to pleaſe God; neither do any that bear the Image of God take pleaſure in your Death, God knows it is ſmall Pleaſure unto his Servants, the Miniſters of the Goſpel, to ſee how madly you venture your eternal State, how wilfully you run into the very flames of Hell.

It is ſmall pleaſure for any of the Servants of God, for to ſee your careleſsneſs in the ways of God, Who is it then that taketh pleaſure in your Death? None but the deadly Enemies of your Souls, the World, the Fleſh and the Devil.

The Devil takes pleaſure in your Sin and Death and you cannot pleaſe him better, than to ſee you run into all manner of uncleanneſs, to ſee you drunk, to hear you curſe, ſwear and lie, this is his delight, it is the delight alſo of wicked Men; as it is plea-

ſing

ſing to your fleſh, it is the fleſh that delighteth in ſports, in luſts, and idleneſs, that is the God that you ſerve.

O wretched Sinner! O miſerable undone Soul! Should the fleſh be pleaſed before your Maker? Will you diſpleaſe the Lord to pleaſe your brutiſh appetites? Is not God worthy to rule the Fleſh? If he ſhall not rule it he will not ſave it. Oh then what will become of it? I fear it is prepared for its own deſtruction; doſt thou love ſtrong drink and ſweet Morſels, and thy eaſe and ſports, and to be ſome body in the World? But do you love the curſe of God with it? Do you love to ſtand trembling at the Bar of God, and to be judged to everlaſting Fire, and to be tormented with Devils for ever? Are the Pleaſures here on Earth which endure but for a Time, worth the ſuffering of eternal fire?

Conſider theſe Things before you go any farther, which I am ſure every Man hath reaſon to conſider that hath a Soul to ſave or loſe; therefore if you will go and die, rather than turn and live, remember it was not to pleaſe God, but the Devil, the World and the Fleſh; and if Men will damn themſelves to pleaſe themſelves, and run into endleſs Torments for delight, and have not the wit nor the grace to hearken after God, or man, that would reclaim them, what remedy, but that they muſt take what they get?

Fourth, Conſider this alſo, that the Lord hath quit himſelf of the death of Sinners; If they are condemned, it is long of themſelves; they die becauſe they will die. O unprofitable rebellious Children, that will not hear the voice of their Father! May not God ſay to you as he ſaid concerning the unprofitable Vineyard. *Iſa.* v. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Judge I pray*

pray betwixt me and my Vineyard; what could I have done more than I have done? I planted it in a fruitful ſoil, I fenced it and gathered out the Stones, and ſet the choiceſt Vine, and it will not grow and bring forth fruit.

Thus may God ſay and lament over *England*; O unprofitable *England*! What ſhall I do with you? I have planted you a glorious Church, I have watered you with the dew of the Goſpel, I have made you Men, and endued you with Reaſon, I have given you a righteous and perfect Law, and you have broken it, you have deſpiſed my Goſpel, and you have undone your Souls. May not God in juſtice take the light of his Goſpel from us, and give it unto others that may make a better improvement of it, to his Honour and their eternal wellfare? What could God have done more than he hath done for us? Hath he not waited long on us? Hath he not entreated us to turn by the Mouth of his faithful Miniſters: Hath not his Holy Spirit been often ſtriving within our Hearts, and ſaying to our Souls, turn, turn ſinner, whither art thou going, doſt thou know what will be the end? How long wilt thou hate thy Friend, and love thine Enemies? When wilt thou deliver up thy ſelf to God, and give Chriſt Jeſus thy Saviour and Redeemer full poſſeſſion of thy Soul? When ſhall that once be? Hath not the Spirit thus pleaded with thee, hath not Life been ſet before thee, and the joys of Heaven? And hath not the certainty of everlaſting Torments of the damned been declared unto you? If you die now, it is becauſe you will die. *You will not have this Man to reign over you*, Luke xix. 1, 5.

O you fooliſh People and unwiſe, why do ye requite the Lord thus? Deut. xxxii. 6. Why do you for-

forſake the Lord for nothing? Why do you forget eternal Life to hunt after the Chaff and Feathers of this World? *Wherefore do you ſpend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not?* Iſa. lv. 1, 2, 3. *Awake now and ſee your own folly, ſeek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; it is the Lord promiſeth, if the wicked Man will forſake his evil way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and turn to the Lord, he will have mercy on him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

The Devil cannot pardon ſin, no, it is God's Power only, ſo he hath a will to pardon; how oft hath he proclaimed free invitations to poor ſinners? Rev. xxii. 17. *Let him that is athirſt come, and whoſoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*

O ſtiff necked and uncircumciſed in Hearts and Ears, that thus are willing to ruin themſelves! When God hath called you, you would not come. How know you, how ſoon you may provoke God to reſolve you ſhall not taſte of the wedding Supper? If you die unconverted, all the World cannot ſave you. O wretched Sinners! why will you be ſo cruel to your ſelves, know not you this, which is a real Truth, that you muſt turn or burn? If you keep your Sins you muſt keep the curſe of God with them: You love your luſts your drunkenneſs, your gluttony, and will not let them go; would you have them bring you to Heaven? If you exſpect that, it is impoſſible, *for there entereth none that are unclean*, Rev. xxi. 12. *For what communion hath light with darkneſs? Or what concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* 2 Cor. vi. 14.

vi. 14. You see then I hope by this time, the case is clear, that you must resolve to turn or die.

Object. But you will ask me, How shall we turn? We have no power of our selves. I will therefore give you a few helps by the way before I conclude.

Ah poor sinful Soul, that would be converted and turned to the Lord, consider the necessity and nature of conversion. You must here consider,

1*st*, From what you must turn: That is in a word, from carnal-self, from the flesh, that would be pleasing before God; from the world, that is the enticing bait to allure your souls; from the Devil, the secret angler for your souls; and from all wilful sins; you must turn to God the end, and to Christ the way to the Father.

2*d*. The second help is this, attend on the word of God, that is the ordinary means to turn souls to God; be often in hearing, reading and meditating upon the holy Scriptures.

3*d*. To be frequent in prayer to God, confess and lament before God your former lives; beseech him to pardon what is past, and to give you his spirit to lead you into his way; and beg of him to be your guide, and your keeper; to save you from the subtile temptations of the Devil, who watcheth for your souls.

4*th*, Give up yourself wholly to the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Physician of your souls, *Acts* iv. 12. *For there is no other name under heaven by which you can be saved*, John xiv. 6. *He is the way the truth and the life, there is no coming to the Father but by him.*

5*th*. If you mean to turn to Christ, do it believingly, trust God with all you have, entertain no low thought of God: let this be upon your hearts continually, That God is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to him by faith. 6*th*.

6th. And laſtly. Be ſure to neglect no Time, but do it ſpeedily. To day, while it is called to day, hear the *Lord's* voice, and harden not your Hearts. If you be not willing to turn to day, you will not be willing to turn to morrow. Call this to mind, that as long as you neglect this Work, you are under the guilt of many thouſand ſins, and under God's wrath, and you ſtand at the very brink of Hell; go then preſently, and fly as for your lives; for you have ſtayed too long already, and have wrong'd God too long; for his ſake therefore turn, if not for his, Oh! for your own precious Souls ſake, reſolve to turn and live; ſtand not wavering any longer, for it is not a Matter of trifling, but of eternal moment; for if you die in your ſins, you die eternally, and then you are undone for ever.

Let me add one uſe more, which ſhall be of Terror to affrighten thoſe that are not reſolved yet to turn.

Uſe. You unconverted ſinful wretches, that always vex the Holy Ghoſt, as your Fathers did; ſo do you: Know aſſuredly, that the righteous God will not be mocked: For if you turn not, you ſhall ſurely die and be damned, 'tis as ſure as if it were already done; at the dreadful day of the *Lord's* appearing, the Hills or the mountains ſhall not hide you from the preſence of the living God. Are you not one that have neglected the tender offers of the Goſpel? Have you not turned your back againſt God? Is it not juſt then that God ſhould turn his back towards you, when you call and cry unto him? Have you not deſerved this Sentence to be pronounced againſt you, *go ye curſed into everlaſting burnings*? What ſhall I ſay to you; O careleſs and unregarding Souls, that will-

wilfully run into your own Deſtruction? What can you ſay when you appear before the great God? can you lay the blame on him? No, you cannot; he hath left you without excuſe, for he hath done his part as to our Salvation: If we die, then it is becauſe we will die, and be damned: Had you been but willing to have been ſaved, you might have lain in *Abraham*'s boſom, but now you muſt, to the grief of your Friends, be tormented in hell with devils, and ſhall not have the requeſt granted you, *To have one drop of water to cool your Tongue*; whereas you might have enjoyed heaven and happineſs after death, if converted: Now you ſhall enjoy nothing but hell and horror, becauſe you die unconverted.

Therefore be perſwaded all ye poor miſerable Souls that are as ſlaves to Satan, be perſwadded while you have a day of Grace, to turn and Live, and not go on in Sin and die.

Which ſhall be the daily prayers of thy poor and unworthy Servant for the ſake of Chriſt.

R. B.

The end of all is, Sinner, turn
Leſt in hell Flames thou ever burn.

FINIS.